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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR

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SUBJECT Status of the Medical Practice in the USSR

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Military doctors are usually members of the Communist Party. They do, therefore, receive better pay, free food and quarters and other privileges that non-military doctors do not receive. Civilian doctors receive 300 rubles per month for the first five years after they graduate. This is raised to 350 rubles after five years of service and 400 rubles after ten years. It is difficult for a civilian doctor with a family to live on the pay and in order to make more money doctors will work at two places. For example, one would work from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM at a hospital and then work at a dispensary from 4:00 PM to 11:00 PM. As a rule civilian doctors are not allowed to have a private practice. There are exceptions to this, as in the case of Party members and well-known elderly medical professors.

2.

In general the working conditions of the Russian dentist are similar to those of medical doctors. However, dentists receive less pay. Then too, they are not required to spend as much time learning their profession, the dentistry course being four years as compared to five for the medical course. Doctors are treated with a little more professional respect than are dentists.

3.

All college and university students receive the same political education. The medical profession receives no special indoctrination.

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4.

In city hospitals and dispensaries a doctor works 48 hours a week. In addition, four or five times a month he takes the 24 hour hospital duty. A doctor must also conduct sanitary inspections of grocery stores, restaurants, etc., in an area assigned to him.
5.

People become doctors because of professional interest. The rewards are relatively good pay compared to the majority of people. People in respected social positions become doctors.
6.

There is a general class discrimination common to all Soviet colleges. For example, the student applicant must be politically reliable. There are preferences and privileges given to the workers and peasants. Then, too, there are higher standards of requirements for the "intelligentsia".
7.

An appeal to the humane sentiments of doctors, pointing out that the Soviet regime is responsible for low living standards, inadequate medical care and facilities, and the general sufferings of the people would be the best appeal to the doctor to assist in simple passive resistance.
8.

The doctors' complaints against the present system are as follows: Every doctor must serve from three to five years after finishing medical school wherever the Ministry of Health sends him. At times even married couples, both doctors, are sent to different parts of the USSR. Doctors also object to the fact that private practice is prohibited. A third complaint voiced by the doctors is that they are always under surveillance by the political officials and suffer much interference from them.
9.

They are careful not to show their feelings and the majority of doctors do not accept the situation philosophically.
10.

Doctors are encouraged to improve their proficiency by taking correspondence courses, reading medical journals and periodicals and by attending medical conferences and meetings.
- 11.
- 12.

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